

Partners in Giving – Special Events

The goal of a special event is to encourage participation, promote enthusiasm, and generate interest in the campaign. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic there may be restrictions for in-person events for the campaign in 2021. According to current guidance from DOA/DPM, **food events will NOT be allowed under the current state guidance**. Up-to-date guidance is available online: <https://dpm.wi.gov/Pages/Employees/Coronavirus-COVID-19.aspx>.

Event Best Practices

- Remember events are not only about fundraising, but also drive enthusiasm and participation in the campaign
- Start early and plan new events and/or themes with your team
- Build on event success from previous campaigns
- Do a variety of large and small events
- Involve leadership in your agency to approve events as some business units may have restrictions on certain activities such as bingo, drawings, etc. Remember drawings must include a way for participants to enter the drawing without donating as no contribution is required to participate.
- If you plan on scheduling an event that requires representatives from umbrella groups or charities, please contact Kristi Heming, phone 608-262-6815 or email heming@chem.wisc.edu to avoid booking conflicts
- For resources/guidelines related to Charitable Gaming – <https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/AboutDOA/Gaming.aspx> or contact Joe Gastel at DOA, phone 608-270-2545 or email joseph.gastel@wisconsin.gov.

Communication Best Practices

- Publicize events, tailoring communications to your agency and/or work groups
- Use a variety of methods to announce events and send reminders to agency staff
- Email announcements
- Digital announcements and updates on agency intranet and digital bulletin boards in common areas
- Signs in common areas, table tents on breakroom/common area tables
- Decorate a bulletin board in common areas with campaign updates, goal thermometer, schedule of events

During the campaign

- Post and distribute results from events, include pictures and anecdotes from events
- Stay focused by sending/posting weekly reminders for upcoming events
- Include campaign goals and current progress
- Include anecdotes about participating charities or dollar buy statements to increase emotional impact
- Drive participation in the campaign with awareness, keep in mind an employee who gives throughout the year usually continues giving to future campaigns. Making sure impact statements including dollar buy information can drive campaign participation outside of special events.

Campaign Resources and Web Tools

- Campaign website: <https://giving.wi.gov/>
- Your Loaned Executives are a valuable resource and can help plan/execute events
- This year, in-person events are limited by local health guidance but you can get creative and build on past successes to update a regular event into a virtual one. Training and Outreach Committee members who can help with virtual events Roxy Walker – roxanne.walker@wisconsin.gov and Kristi Heming - heming@chem.wisc.edu
- Online Auction Tool suggestion - <https://www.32auctions.com/> which has both free and paid options
- Polls, voting on content/pictures for costume contests, pet pictures, pumpkin decorating, or “Who is this?” can be done using online survey tools such as Survey Monkey that allows embedded photos. Check with your business unit to see if you have a survey software available to easily poll your staff on contests.
- Wellness tools such as step tracking software and online free services offer options to host teams for steps and stair tracking events. Also, if your agency participates in Well Wisconsin – <https://www.wellwisconsin-staywell.com/> there are team options for monthly wellness events and steps.

Special Events – Virtual / Socially Distant

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic there may be restrictions for in-person events for the campaign in 2021. Be sure to follow agency and local health recommendations when planning events. You can adapt events usually held in-person to a digital or virtual format. Feel free to reach out to the Training and Outreach committee for assistance in converting events to virtual in this year's campaign. **Food events are not permitted for the 2021 campaign.**

Challenging times call for creative solutions to drive excitement and participation in the campaign. Some past events will be difficult or impossible to hold with pandemic limitations but don't be discouraged. Adapt past successes into virtual events or experiment with new events.

Work with your Loaned Executive to develop online/virtual events or you can contact either Roxy Walker – roxanne.walker@wisconsin.gov and/or Kristi Heming – heming@chem.wisc.edu for assistance with special event planning or ideas to convert past events into virtual events for the 2021 campaign.

Vary size and scope of events throughout the campaign. Communicate results and event plans to staff to drive engagement and combat campaign fatigue. Stage a variety of virtual and socially distant events and run virtual events for a set amount of time to maintain interest of staff. Many agency successes last year came from running virtual events over a few days or a couple of weeks and peppering in unique events to keep messaging fresh and engage staff throughout the campaign.

Virtual/Hybrid/Socially Distant Kick Off Event – work with your Loaned Executive and/or Kristi Heming to schedule a Kick Off event with an umbrella and local organizations to drive awareness of the work these organizations do and the impact of the campaign. Virtual speakers and recorded videos are available for these events.

“Why do you give?” Online Posts – set up a place online for your employees to post stories or statements about why they give to the campaign. Similar to setting up an easel in high traffic area but online so people can participate virtually. Set up a blog on your intra-net, a shared document, a Google Jamboard, or a social media page and encourage employees to share stories or statements about why they give. Consider allowing people to post anonymously as well to encourage participation by either having an option of leaving name or not in the post or designating a volunteer to collect statements via email and then posting them so anyone who prefers privacy feel comfortable.

Virtual Lunch and Learn Events with Umbrella Organizations – work with your Loaned Executive and/or Kristi Heming to schedule a lunch event with an umbrella and local organizations to drive awareness of the work these organizations do and the impact of the campaign.

Cookbook Sale – solicit recipes from previous food events such as Chili Cookoff, Bake Sales, Cultural Potluck, and others. Compile recipes submitted by staff and publish your own Cookbook to sell for the campaign. To add to the fun, you can have people vote on their favorite recipes and award the winners with prizes. Drive excitement using agency favorites. You can publish as a PDF and distribute digitally to lower cost to produce or work with local printers and resources to print physical copies to send to purchasers.

Calendar – pick a theme and solicit nature and/or pet photos from staff. Vote on entries to determine which photos should be included or use photos/entries from other campaign events and create a calendar to sell. You can publish as a PDF and distribute digitally to lower cost to produce or work with local printers and resources to print physical copies to send to purchasers.

Telethon – hold a virtual or socially distant telethon with members of staff and leadership manning the phones to take calls for pledges and answer questions about the campaign. Work with your Loaned Executive to involve umbrella groups or representatives from organizations in the event.

Trivia Contest – stage a virtual/hybrid/socially distant Trivia event. This is an effective event for business units and agency-wide participation. Do themed events or multiple events and combine entry costs. Host games on your intranet site, MS Teams, or use online platforms such as <https://www.kahoot.com>.

Pet Photo Contest – solicit photos of pets from employees and post them online for the whole agency to enjoy. Allow people to vote on the photos as a way to drive donations and present prizes to the winners. Also, you can incorporate this activity into a scavenger hunt event or a “Who’s that Pet?” to match up with their humans or use submissions as part of a calendar sold for additional donations.

Lip Sync Battle – solicit videos from individuals or groups at your agency. Charge an entry fee donation and allow a voting period. Think groups singing, TikTok dancing, or pet tricks, dress up and make it a production. Keep submissions with content, lyrics, and costumes work appropriate but encourage fun and participation from performers and the rest of your agency by voting for their favorites.

Thank you to the WI Department of Children and Families for sharing this very successful event! Sample structure from their event:

To participate, entry donations are as follows:

- *Any <AGENCY> staff member can participate with a minimum \$25 entry donation. Families, friends, spouses, and pets are welcome to participate with the AGENCY staff member.*
- *Any <AGENCY> all staff group of 2-4 can participate together (with the magic of video editing) with a minimum \$50 entry donation.*
- *Any <AGENCY> all staff group of 5 or more can participate with a minimum \$100 entry donation.*

Lip Sync Battle rules:

- *The first 28 videos will be entered into the battle.*
- *ANYONE can contribute toward your entry fee! In addition to your colleagues, family and friends will also be excited to support your efforts to contribute to this great cause!*
- *All videos must be 512 MB or less (around 2-3 minutes of video on a smart phone)*
- *All videos must be work appropriate including song lyrics, dance moves, outfits, etc.*
- *AGENCY groups, wigs, outfits, dance moves, animals, and fun are all highly encouraged!*

Please submit videos by <DATE>, and submitting your entry fee on [Mobile Cause](#) under event name “Lip Sync Battle”. Following successful submission and donation, please email video information.

Virtual step/stair challenge, 10K, Walk-a-Thon, or Fitness Challenge – participants/team volunteer to walk a specific distance or get credit for a specific number of steps/miles during a set timeframe. Participants are sponsored by other members of their work group or agency.

Agencies participating with Well Wisconsin have the option of setting up a team captain and inviting participants to a team for challenges. You can use existing monthly health challenges or step tracking to compete. More information can be found under the Teams link on <https://www.wellwisconsin-staywell.com/>. Other step tracking software and online wellness tools have team elements and can help track progress on challenges.

Get agency or work group volunteers to be runners/walkers, set up sponsors for each participant. Sponsors can be other members of the work group, volunteers can get their own sponsors, leadership could sponsor specific participants. Sponsors would agree to pay either a donation based on completed distance/steps/etc. or a flat donation for participating.

During the competition timeframe participants would then walk around their neighborhoods, yards, parks, and other socially distant venues. Fitness trackers could be used to track steps/distance. Encourage participants to submit selfies and pictures of their travels to share with your agency.

Leadership Videos – work with leadership in your agency to record videos about Partners in Giving, personal stories, impact of giving, campaign successes. Feature the videos as part of an event and then make the videos available online for employees. Incorporate them into a scavenger hunt event for the campaign.

Virtual Bingo – create Bingo cards, get creative and use pictures or symbols or just go classic numbers. Post bingo numbers on your agency intranet or communicate to participants over several days. Provide prizes to winners. Bingo card options are available for use for the campaign, contact Kristi Heming at heming@chem.wisc.edu for assistance with generating Bingo cards for your event.

Team Theme Days – develop various themes that can be done remotely during video calls or meetings such as “Crazy Hat Day” or “Band T-Shirt Day” to drive awareness of the campaign. Tie in with Pledge Form drawings to build participation. (Remember, donations are not required for drawings so make sure you have a participation option for those who don’t wish to donate.)

Local Restaurant/Event Auctions – buy or solicit donations of gift cards for local restaurants, theaters, sporting events and auction them off for people to use in the future.

Pumpkin Carving/Painting Contest (Virtual/Socially Distant) – buy pumpkins or solicit donations from a local farm and sell them for \$5 each or allow people to provide their own pumpkins to decorate at home. If you are selling pumpkins work with your agency/business unit to arrange safe, socially distant pick up of the pumpkins and have participants decorate at home. Put pictures of all the entries on intranet, blog, etc. so employees can vote for the winners. Top three get prizes.

Halloween Costume Contest (Virtual/Socially Distant) – solicit volunteers to dress up for Halloween and submit pictures for judging or post them online and have other staff vote on costumes. Provide prizes to the top three contestants.

Halloween (or just because) Pet Costume Contest – solicit pictures from volunteers of their pets dressed up in Halloween or silly costumes for judging or have other staff vote. Provide prizes to the winners. Local pet stores often will donate gift cards or products for charity so solicit early in the campaign for pet friendly prizes.

“Who is that?” Virtual Event – solicit pictures of co-workers when they were younger and post the pictures on agency intranet, blog, etc. with a number. Sell guessing “sheets” with names for a donation (\$5.00) and the person with the most correct answers wins a prize.

Book and/or Media Sale (Virtual/Socially Distant) – at the beginning of the campaign or before begin collection donations of books and media for a sale. Schedule a sale in a central room during the campaign or post the items online for a virtual sale. Choose whether to price items individually or do tier pricing such as \$2 for hardcovers, \$1 for paperbacks, \$2 DVDs, etc. and organize the items on multiple tables to encourage browsing. Set up shifts of volunteers to take money and keep tables organized. Any leftover books and media can be donated locally after the sale. This is a great event annually at many agencies for readers to enjoy and to keep books circulating for a great cause.

Golf Outing – set a Challenge. Have a prize for all who participate. Try a One-Club Golf Outing with a Beat the Director Challenge. Each player contributes \$5 to get in on the action. The Director gets one shot for each four-some. Each player pays \$5 to get in on the challenge to beat the director’s one shot. Build camaraderie, have fun and benefit the campaign while you improve your golf score.

“Back to Normal” Food Event – sell tickets to a food event to be held at a TBA time once social distancing and food restrictions are lifted. Get volunteers to sign up for dishes they will bring. Combine with auction for gift cards to local restaurants as food options to help keep people safe.

Turn the Radio On! – your favorite radio station may be willing to contribute prizes such as lunches, pizza, beverages, flowers, event tickets to help promote your campaign. Get the word out and let listeners in Dane County know that the state, university, and UW Health employees are involved in the Partners in Giving Campaign. In past years, WOLX (94.9 FM) and WMMM (105.5 FM) have participated by donating prizes to silent auctions.

Scavenger Hunt – create a scavenger hunt that can be done remotely. Ask participants to find specific things in their home, yard, or neighborhood and submit pictures of them as they are “found” such as wildlife, plants/flowers, or certain types of vehicles such as delivery trucks or specific make/model/color.

Create a scavenger hunt using the Partners in Giving Campaign website <https://giving.wi.gov/> and/or booklet (<https://giving.wi.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2020-Partners-in-Giving-Booklet.pdf>) to drive participation, campaign awareness, and highlight the many options available for giving. You can also incorporate other events into a scavenger hunt such as providing clues that drive engagement with “Why do you give” posts, pet photos, costume contest, leadership videos, recorded videos provided by umbrella groups and organizations, and materials from the Kick Off or a Lunch and Learn event.

Create a “clue based” scavenger hunt making participants solve the clue and provide a photo as proof awarding the individual or team with the most correct answers. For example, “Underground train for hunger” would be a picture of a Subway Restaurant sign. Good resources include quick internet searches for “Virtual Scavenger Hunt” or “Digital Scavenger Hunt” or “Nature Scavenger Hunt” “Scavenger Hunt for Adults” and some specific websites with suggestions and instructions:

<https://www.girlsguidetopm.com/scavenger-hunt-teambuilding>
<https://www.doinggoodtogether.org/bhf/nature-scavenger-hunt>
<https://www.greenmatters.com/p/nature-scavenger-hunt-ideas>
<https://www.goosechase.com/blog/planning-a-scavenger-hunt-for-adults/>
<https://www.diva-girl-parties-and-stuff.com/scavenger-hunts.html>

Basket / Gift Auction – solicit donations of completed gift baskets, gifts, or themed items from individuals, teams, departments, or leadership in your agency. Determine the value of the donations/basket to determine starting prices for the auction. Take pictures and post on intranet or online auction site, display baskets in a central location, set a timeline for the auction, and all proceeds go to benefit Partners in Giving.

Try to keep value of baskets reasonable, WI sports team themed baskets usually sell well, advertise as potential holiday gifts, smaller baskets with more variety tend to sell better. Be creative, items should be new or gently used. **Any FOOD items included for auction should be unopened, factory sealed packages due to Covid-19 pandemic guidelines.**

Successful themes and examples:

- Coffee: Coffee beans, flavored syrups, mugs, French Press, biscotti
- Chocolate: Variety of truffles or chocolates, chocolate themed items such as tea towels, mugs, magnets
- Italian Feast: Olive Oil, spice mixes, kitchen tools, checkered table cloth
- Spa: Variety of bath products, eye mask, spa socks, cotton gloves, lotion, gift cards for services
- Game Night: Board games, microwave popcorn, cards/card games like Uno
- Movie Night: DVDs or Blu-ray movies, popcorn, movie tickets or theater gift cards

Post auctions on your intra-net or internal agency blog if resources are available. Otherwise, online auction tools are available at low cost. A successful tool used in the campaign is <https://www.32auctions.com/> which allows you to post up to 20 items for free. You can solicit donors to pay for the service for larger auctions or do multiple auctions throughout the campaign to reduce costs. If you have many different donations for auction, you can always do shorter auctions using a theme and group like items into separate auctions.

Donate your “Skills” – ask employees to donate their time and skills and sell or auction off. Some people are good at photography, carpentry, baking, sewing, cleaning, dog sitting, and all kinds of other things. Ask employees to donate their talents to be auctioned off to benefit Partners in Giving. Plan for a way for the skills to be delivered virtually such as using Skype, TEAMS, etc. or delivered in a socially distant way. Maybe someone will donate time to rake yards, or teach a mini “online class” to benefit the campaign.

Turn the Radio On! – your favorite radio station may be willing to contribute prizes such as lunches, pizza, beverages, flowers, event tickets to help promote your campaign. Get the word out and let listeners in Dane County know that the state, university, and UW Health employees are involved in the Partners in Giving Campaign. In past years, WOLX (94.9 FM) and WMMM (105.5 FM) have participated by donating prizes to silent auctions.

Pledge Form Drawings – prior to the campaign collect prizes from local businesses and donors. Schedule weekly drawings of returned pledge forms or use the online donor list. Create an email form option for people who wish to participate in the drawings without donating.

The earlier the pledge or email form is submitted the more chances to win! Pledge forms are available online this year so employees can submit the pdf to make a donation or email to designated staff to participate without donating. Make sure you provide a way for participants to enter the drawing without donating as no contribution is required to participate.

Carnival or Game Day – create a carnival in your work area by setting up games. Sell individual tickets or bundles so people can play throughout the day/week. Get silly prizes at a Dollar/Party store and track winners for bragging rights.

Many websites have suggestions of simple, yet fun carnival games. Some popular examples:

- Putting Green
- Bozo Buckets
- Balloon Pop
- Pick a Duck
- Water Coin Drop
- Bean Bag Toss
- Spin the Wheel
- Ring Toss

Good resources include quick internet searches for “Carnival Games” or “Games for Events” or “Free Carnival Game Ideas” and some specific websites with suggestions and instructions:

<https://www.thespruce.com/homemade-carnival-games-family-festivals-3128945>

<https://www.carnivalsavers.com/freeboothideas.html>

<https://www.pinterest.com/carnivalsavers/carnival-games/>

https://www.momjunction.com/articles/carnival-games-for-kids_00376923/

<https://tipjunkie.com/diy-carnival-games-for-your-next-big-bash/>